

# INTER-RELIGIOUS CONFLICT RESOLUTION THROUGH DIALOGUE MODEL

## THE CLASH OF CIVILIZATIONS

**Samuel P. Huntington, Harvard Political Scientist, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (1996).**

"the fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural. Nation states will remain the most powerful actors in world affairs, but the principal conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilizations. The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics" "During the Cold War the world was divided into the First, Second and Third Worlds. Those divisions are no longer relevant. It is far more meaningful now to group countries not in terms of their political or economic systems or in terms of their level of economic development but rather in terms of their culture and civilization." "A civilization is a cultural entity."

### Why Civilizations Will Clash?

First, differences among civilizations are not only real; they are basic. Civilizations are differentiated from each other by history, language, culture, tradition and, most important, religion.

Second, the world is becoming a smaller place. The interactions between peoples of different civilizations are increasing; these increasing interactions intensify civilization consciousness and awareness of differences between civilizations and commonalities within civilizations.

Third, the processes of economic modernization and social change throughout the world are separating people from longstanding local identities. They also weaken the nation state as a source of identity.

In much of the world religion has moved in to fill this gap, often in the form of movements that are labeled "fundamentalist."

Fourth, the growth of civilization-consciousness is enhanced by the dual role of the West. On the one hand, the West is at a peak of power. At the same time, however, and perhaps as a result, a return to the roots phenomenon is occurring among non-Western civilizations. [Com: Isn't that the talk in even theology?]

Fifth, cultural characteristics and differences are less mutable and hence less easily compromised and resolved than political and economic ones.

Finally, economic regionalism is increasing...Common culture... is clearly facilitating the rapid expansion of the economic relations between the People's Republic of China and Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore and the overseas Chinese communities in other Asian countries.

For the relevant future, there will be no universal civilization, but instead a world of different civilizations, each of which will have to learn to coexist with the others (*Foreign Affairs*, 1993).

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Russia, Japan, and India are "swing civilizations". The major battle between Islamic and Non-Islamic Civilizations.

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**Hizb ut-Tahrir (Muslim Political Party), *The Inevitability of the Clash of Civilizations* (2002).**

"the clash of civilisations is an inevitable matter. It existed in the past, exists now and will remain until the clash ends shortly before the Hour, since it does not come except upon the worst of creation. Do not be deceived, O Muslims, by the callers to the dialogue who place their heads in the sand and condone humiliation and defeat. Make the preparations required for the conflict, since the Capitalist Western civilisation has knocked you down militarily, politically and economically; however they will never defeat you intellectually"

**Hans-Gert Pötering, President of the European Parliament, *Dialogue of Cultures or Clash of Civilisations?*(2008)**

Of course, inter-cultural dialogue embraces all cultures - and none is homogeneous or monolithic. But the Islamic dimension is the most pressing.

If we work within the mind-set of a clash of civilisations, then we could easily cause this pessimistic theory to become a self-fulfilling prophecy. If instead we work towards what the United Nations has called the 'dialogue of civilisations', we can remain open to discovering, understanding and working with other cultures, ethnicities and religions.

The word 'dialogue' comes from ancient Greek. One of its senses is that of a conversation between two or more people, made up of statement and counter-statement. A slightly different sense arises from the derivation of the word from the Greek roots 'dia' (meaning 'through') and 'logos' ('word, sense or meaning'). This makes dialogue a 'flow of meaning', an exchange of ideas, a process of mutual communication between partners, based on mutual respect. By holding a constant and regular dialogue of this kind, we can and we will get to know each other better, improve our mutual understanding, respect each other's diversity, and hopefully work together as strong and trust-worthy partners.

**Dr. Sidi M. Omar, visiting researcher and professor of the UNESCO Chair of Philosophy for Peace at Universitat Jaume I, Castellón, Spain. *Clash of Civilisations vs. Cross-Cultural Dialogue* (2008)**

It is worth mentioning that Huntington later revisited his clash hypothesis following the 11 September events.[ 'The Age of Muslim Wars', Newsweek, Vol. 138, No. 25, (17 December 2001), 42-47.] He then admitted that cultural differences between Western and Islamic civilisations do not necessarily lead to clash, and that there are other political factors to be taken into account. He also highlighted the crucial importance of dialogue between the two sides particularly in a world that has increasingly become transnational and interdependent.

As many commentators have pointed out, what we are actually facing these days is not necessarily a clash of civilisations but a clash of 'ignorance'.

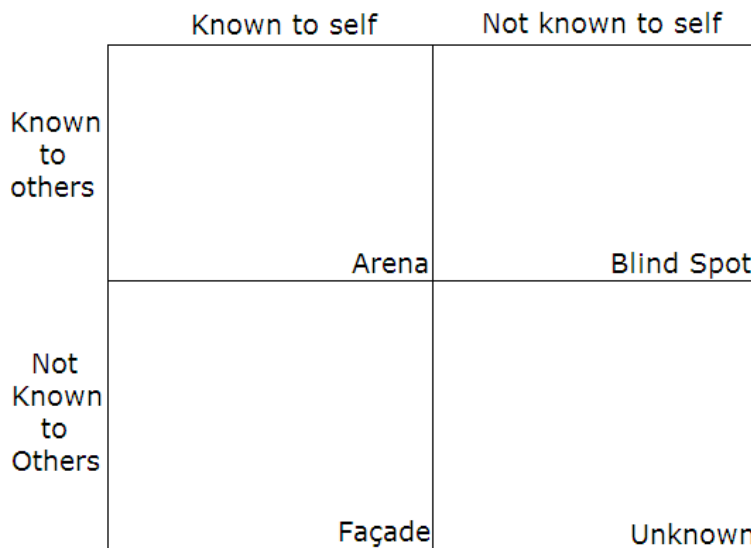
-Acknowledging the differences and highlighting the commonalities.

-the need for an accelerated educational effort at all levels whereby people of different religions and cultures could know each other.

## TWO MODELS PERTINENT TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION

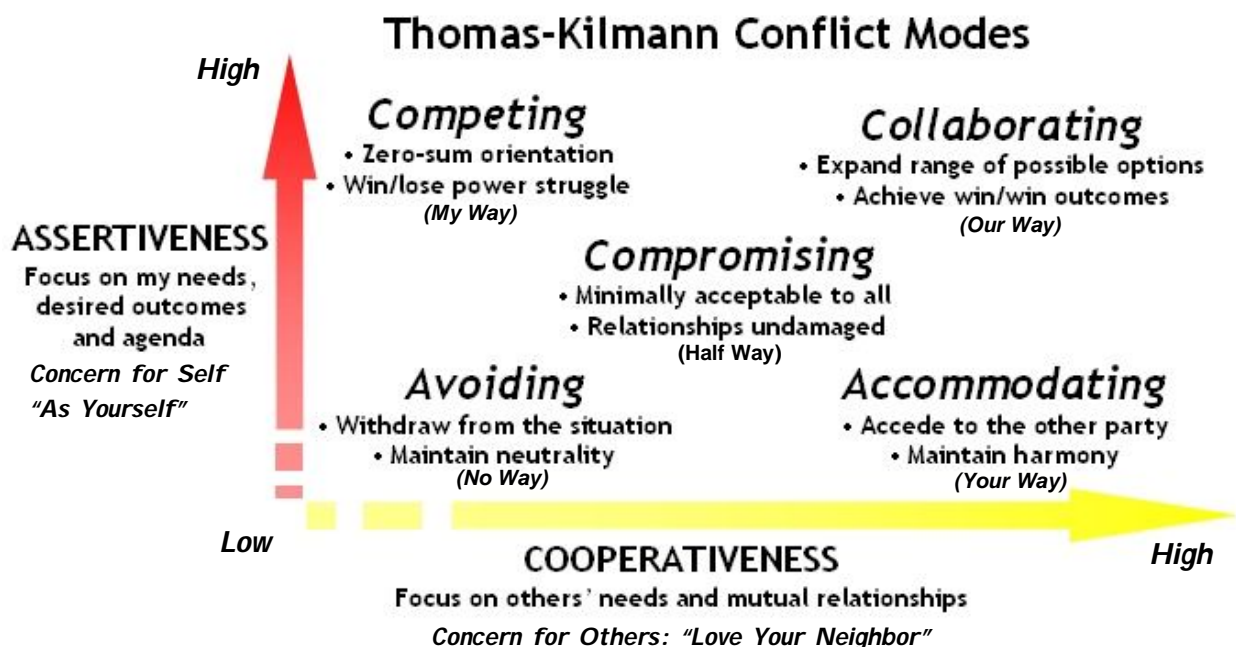
### *Johari Window (Seeking a Transparent Ground)*

#### **Johari Window**



### *The Dual Concern Model (Thomas-Kilmann Model)*

The Thomas-Kilmann model was designed by two psychologists, Kenneth Thomas and Ralph Kilmann (1974), to illustrate the options we have when handling conflict. There are two dimensions in the model. The first dimension, the vertical axis, is concerned with conflict responses based on our attempt to get what we want. Thomas and Kilmann call these the Assertiveness options. The other dimension, the horizontal axis, is concerned with responses based on helping others get what they want. Thomas and Kilmann call these the Co-operativeness (empathy) options. This creates 5 basic types of response.



**Competing** (assertive, uncooperative), **Avoiding** (unassertive, uncooperative), **Accommodating** (unassertive, cooperative), **Collaborating** (assertive, cooperative), and **Compromising** (intermediate assertiveness and cooperativeness).

**COMPETING:** *Conquer it!* Apologetic, Highlights Differences, Disregards Commonalities.

**AVOIDING:** *Call off!* Ignores Differences, Ignoring Commonalities.

**ACCOMODATING:** *Convert to!* Yielding. "Thy Will Be Done!"

**COMPROMISING:** *Cease-Fire!* Let's Agree to a Truce.

**COLLABORATING:** *Co-operate!* Acknowledges Differences, Highlights Commonalities as areas of cooperation.